

Quirky Mature Comedy “Inside Job” Lampoons Conspiracy Theories



Reagan and her team

On October 22, the first ten episodes of *Inside Job* aired on Netflix. The show is not only irreverent, witty, and quirky, but its well-developed characters, voice acting, animation, and plot make the show captivating enough to watch, from episode to episode. Its interlinking stories lead to a devastating “resolution” that will shake you to the core.

Inside Job, a mix of workplace comedy and paranoid fiction, is the first animated series by Shion Takeuchi, a former writer for *Gravity Falls*, writer for [*Disenchantment*](#), and former storyboarder for *Regular Show*. The creator of *Gravity Falls*, Alex Hirsch, is an executive producer, as is Takeuchi. It is the first series created by her as [part of a deal with Netflix](#) to produce animated content. Hirsch [said that](#) he was inspired by the *X-Files* while he and Takeuchi [were inspired](#) by pages of the *Weekly World News*, an outlandish tabloid.

Inside Job has six main characters: tech genius Reagan Ridley (voiced by Lizzy Caplan), yes-man/fratboy Brett Hand (voiced by Clark Duke), biochemist Dr. Andre (voiced by Bobby Lee), humanoid dolphin/supersoldier Glenn Dolphman (voiced by John DiMaggio), PR officer Gigi Thompson (Tisha Campbell), and psychic mushroom organism Magic Myc (voiced by Brett

Gelman). Supporting characters include current CEO J.R. Scheimpough (voiced by Andrew Daley) and Reagan's father Rand Ridley (voiced by Christian Slater). Reagan, J.R., Andrew, Glenn, Gigi, and Magic work at Cognito, Inc., with Reagan managing her co-workers and wanting to make the world "[a better place](#)," while dealing with her paranoid father, the former company CEO. Reagan herself is multiracial as her mother, Tomiko (voiced by Suzy Nakamura), is Japanese. In this world, every conspiracy theory is real, with Cognito as a shadow government entity that makes this all happen, working for those in the shadows.

The ten-episode first season of *Inside Job* introduces viewers [to Cognito, Inc.](#), where [all manner of conspiracies are afoot](#). In the first episode, Reagan tries to replace the president with a robot after the previous one was "too dumb" to manipulate, while her goal to become the head of the team is squashed by her boss, J.R., who brings in a man named Brett Hand to co-lead the team. In the second episode, Brett and Reagan are confronted with the challenging task of figuring out who to fire as Cognito makes cutbacks, while her team tries to kiss up to her, thinking they will be fired, and having to fight off a powerful monster.

Later episodes feature a reptilian/lizard people gala, Reagan attempting to get a boyfriend, selling outdated and dangerous products to a town stuck in the 1980s, Reagan attempting to stop her dad from learning about her mom's wedding, ghosting a flirty secret agent, a free love commune on the Moon, a mole inside of Cognito, and trying to stop a robot by delving deep into her mind, while learning the truth about her father.

Weirdness and mature subject matters [are at the center of *Inside Job*](#), with nothing held back. The show has characters cursing and blood being spilled, even in the first episode. Curse words fly right and left, mostly out of Reagan's mouth, and for good reason! Clearly, due to this, some people may not like the show or find it "too mature," or even sexual at times, in par with [other mature animations](#) that have been released recently, whether [by Netflix](#) or on [other platforms](#).

While reviewers rightly described this series as [mocking "our brain-fried reality,"](#) having a "[lot of energy](#)," being "[emotionally wise and sincere](#)," there is more to this show than that. It uses, in Takeuchi's words, comedy [to "process difficult emotions](#), and... a way to explore these kinds of topics [conspiracy theories] and the ridiculousness of them." This is made clear from the fact that at first Reagan feels threatened by Brett. He comes to her for help, as he is under too much pressure. And both work together to control the rogue president and help each other.

Although it reminds me a little of *Mr. Robot*, which focused on a group of hackers trying to bring down the “elites,” *Inside Job* is the opposite of this, as the protagonists of this series are the same elites that those characters were attempting to take out by any means necessary.

One of my favorite parts of *Inside Job* is the weirdness and quirkiness, whether it’s the human-hybrids, the lizard people, assassins (like one who shot JFK, who is voiced by Alex Hirsch), or something else entirely. The animation, music score, and background art are superb as well, with all sorts [of easter eggs](#) linking to other shows and topics, for those who wish to delve deeper. Like [the highly-enjoyable *Disenchantment*](#), drinking, alcoholism, and drug use are some of the show’s themes. On the other hand, it is more comedic than *Disenchantment*, although its comedy isn’t constructed in the same way as it is in shows [like *Star Trek: Lower Decks*](#).

One of the funnier episodes is when they show all the people said to be reptilian, like Al Gore, Taylor Swift, Mark Zuckerberg, Guillermo El Toro, Ellen DeGeneres, Judge Judy, Anderson Cooper, and so on. I chuckled a little when they made fun of the Jason Bourne series and how ridiculous it is, or the joke about the Bechdel test. The show references series like *Stranger Things* (set in the 1980s), *Ghostbusters*, *Star Wars*, *The Terminator*, *The Goonies*, *Harry Potter*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and *E.T.*, along with [Blockbuster](#), Jeff Bezos, and the James Bond films, to name a few references.

Inside Job has a better spy episode than anything that *Q-Force* could come up with and reminds me a little of a [Phineas and Ferb](#) episode, “[Live and Let Dive](#),” where the evil doctor has a lair, although *Inside Job* ups the ante to something that is even more hilarious than either one of those shows.

Like other shows, broken families and having friends are also themes featured in *Inside Job*. This is noted in the show’s third episode, when the audience learns that Reagan’s parents are divorced, with her mother writing erotic stories. Reagan tries to make sure she has a group of friends among her co-workers, so they all support her, no matter the mission they must undertake, although Brett is the most loyal and supportive of them all. This happens when her [social anxiety](#) comes to the fore in the show’s third episode, when she is told to hug people at a reptoid gala, while she remains socially inept, learning it is because of a robot her father invented. It also happens when she has relationship problems and attempts to get someone with toxic masculinity, and has issues with codependency.

Some fans have [even speculated](#) that Reagan might be autistic. Having someone who is socially awkward and anxious is not unique to *Inside Job*, though. Cleopatra, the protagonist of *Cleopatra in Space*, [has ADHD](#), Luz Noceda, the bisexual Afro-Latina protagonist of *The Owl House*, [is neurodivergent](#), and Entrapta, the socially awkward (and morally grey) sciency princess, in *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* [is autistic](#). In addition, Peridot, a non-binary Gem woman in *Steven Universe* has been [described](#) by some fans as autistic, since *Steven Universe* creator Rebecca Sugar said [that none](#) of the Gems in the series can be considered neurotypical.

Apart from Hirsch and Takeuchi, the others working on *Inside Job* are a talented bunch. They include animator Mike Hollingsworth, one of the show's executive producers, who was the supervising director of *BoJack Horseman*, Pete Mitchels, an animator who directed the first two seasons of *Rick and Morty* and episodes of *Family Guy*, and Chantal Hennessey, who was a supervising director for 24 episodes of *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*. Additionally, the series art director, Jeffrey M. Thompson, was an art director for *Rick and Morty*, and an animator and artist on *Gravity Falls*. Two of the show's animators, Andrew Bomo, the technical director, and Justin Schultz, worked on shows such as *Harley Quinn*, *Invincible*, *Big Mouth*, *Onyx Equinox*, [Milo Murphy's Law](#), and *DuckTales*, to name a few. The opening theme is performed by Bronze, featuring BBRC, and is titled "Pa\$\$ the Time (Part 2)" while Ryan Elder and Steve Reidell are composers of the show's electronic music.

Inside Job seems to have been accepted relatively positively, including on the [show's subreddit](#), which currently has over 800 subscribers, and [has an official account](#) with over 6,000 followers on Twitter, coupled with a fake website for [Cognito, Inc.](#) for interested fans. I expect there will be fanfiction as well, but currently, there is a good amount of fan art of Reagan, noting the show's references to other popular media. It is nothing like [the documentary of the same name](#) which focuses on the causes of the 2007-2008 global economic crisis. All in all, I am hopeful and optimistic that this show will be popular, although some people will undoubtedly sneer at it for one reason or another, probably the same people who dislike shows like *Hazbin Hotel*, [Helluva Boss](#), and the like. Currently, it has high marks on sites like [Rotten Tomatoes](#).



The inside of Cognito, Inc. shown in the first episode

The second half of *Inside Job*'s first season will presumably be ten episodes long since 20 episodes of the series [were ordered in April 2019 by Netflix](#). This show is unique and despite its strange nature at times, the characters, especially the protagonist Reagan, are relatable. It is unlike any other show I've ever seen. It doesn't fall into the usual animated sitcom model that mature animations sometimes tend to end up in, which began with the premiere of *The Simpsons* in 1989, and bolstered by shows like *South Park*, *Family Guy*, and *American Dad!*, to name a few, that fit into the sitcom format.

Inside Job has the themes of togetherness and chosen family, with Reagan telling Brett that she and the rest of their team are his “business family forever” while she temporarily reconnects with her dad after feeling, rightly, that he is a poor father, before learning his terrible secret, all while he gaslights her repeatedly. Her relationship with her father is toxic and [seeped in deep-seated trauma](#), which affects her daily life, personality, and everything else, while serving at the center of the show itself. The series shares some similarities, on a very limited basis, in terms of locations, to *Futurama*, as the characters [traveled to the Moon](#) in that particular series, and some visual jokes, but that's about it, as *Inside Job* goes to darker places and confronts issues that *Futurama* didn't.

The story, which [Hirsch described](#) as Takeuchi's "hilarious bizarre fever dream of a show that could only come from her unique vision of the world" will undoubtedly continue with support from Netflix. Hirsch [also said](#) that since *Inside Job* is for adults "keep all them Disney-babies far away."

Caplan [described the show rightly](#), saying it serves as a public service, "reminding us of a time where they [conspiracy theories] were niche and maybe reserved for a guy who lives in a cabin in the woods alone and not half the population" and joked she could get behind the lizard people conspiracy, while saying that the theories the show tackles are vintage but fun at the same time. She additionally praised her character as not falling into existing tropes or archetypes while lamenting that "it's depressing where the modern conspiracy theories are going." I think all of us can agree with that, as some theories are downright dangerous, leading to death, violence, or whatnot.

In the second part of season 1, it would be wonderful to have openly queer characters in the main cast of *Inside Job*. The current episodes have some queer vibes, like the orgy of reptilians or how all the team (including two who are male) have crushes/like Brett Hand. Additionally, Andre identifies as "always sexual" with men and women around him as shown in the show's fourth episode, the same episode which shows a polyamorous couple in the background. There are also the vibes between the British secret agent, Rafe Masters, and the nemesis in one episode, vibes that are clearly homoerotic and are over the top, parodying the James Bond spy films. The astronauts are drawn in by space sex. Glenn has sex dreams about everyone on the team.

As for Reagan, based on the interpersonal conflicts she has been a part of in the first part of Season 1, it seems that in future episodes she will have to face her dad, who has become an obstacle to her progress and moving up the ranks of Cognito, instead of any LGBTQ+ focus on her part. Even so, the series could have an episode where she meets someone, just as Bean [did in *Disenchantment*](#) or Ash [in *Final Space*](#), who she connects with on a deeper level without taking away from her main arc, although I find that to be unlikely.

In any case, I would highly recommend *Inside Job* for its hilarity, quirkiness, uniqueness, strong animation, character development, and wild plots.